

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/089,932

Examiner

Louise N. Leary

Applicant(s)

LUYTEN ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☐ This communication is responsive to amendment filed April 3, 2002.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 29-50.
3. ☐ The drawings filed on _____ are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.
5. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - (a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
6. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

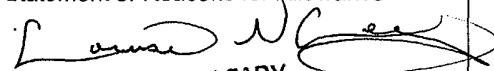
7. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
8. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No. _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed _____, which has been approved by the Examiner.
 - (c) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet.

9. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No. _____ |
| 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449), Paper No. <u>1</u> | 6 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material | 8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Other |


LOUISE N. LEARY
PRIMARY EXAMINER

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

In the claims:

In claim 37, line 13; in claim 38, line 4; and in claim 48, line 5, insert ---SEQ. ID. NO. 1--- before the period.

In claim 50, line 4, add a period after "stability".

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The reasons for allowance of the claims is that none of the prior art of record disclose or suggest (I) an in vivo assay to identify molecular markers linked to phenotypic stability of a chondrocyte cell population comprising the steps of (a) injecting intramuscularly or subcutaneously in a non-human animal a suspension of isolated or expanded cells in an iso-osmotic liquid, the suspension comprises articular chondrocytes in an amount equivalent to at least 1×10^6 chondrocytes as applied to immune-deficient mice, (b) allowing for formation of cartilaginous tissue, (c) sacrificing the animal, (d) evaluating the cartilage formed histologically for stable, non-vascularized cartilage in vivo, and (e) identifying positive or negative molecular markers of those isolated or expanded cells evaluated in step (d) which form stable, non-vascularized cartilage in vivo; (II) a method to monitor passage by cell expansion and/or to predict when cell expansion must be stopped and/or recover cells that already lost their

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phenotypic stability, comprising detecting the expression of molecular markers of chondrocyte phenotypic stability markers; (III) an antibody specifically recognizing part of the extracellular domain of FGFR-3 and as such useful for cell sorting, obtained by immunizing animals with FGFR-3 or with a fragment thereof or with the synthetic peptide SEQ. ID NO. 1; (IV) a diagnostic kit ; (V) a cell culture exhibiting chondrocyte phenotypic stability in which the cells express a ratio of BMP-2 and/or FGFR-3 as molecular markers; (VI) a cell culture exhibiting chondrocyte phenotypic stability in which the cells do not express activin-like kinase-1 (ALK-1) and/or markers co-detectable with this marker and/or specific reporter constructs associated with these markers as molecular markers negatively associated with chondrocyte phenotypic stability as claimed in the present invention.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Louise N. Leary whose telephone number is (703) 308-3533. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 10 to 6:30 pm.

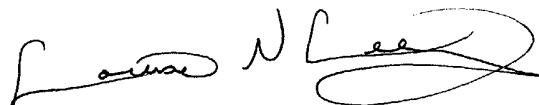
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brenda Brumback, can be reached on (703) 306-3220. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1235.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louise N. Leary", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

LOUISE N. LEARY
PRIMARY EXAMINER

September 27, 2003